DC. (Harvey & Sonder, Fl. Capen. 2: 20. 1861-1862).

K. THOTHATHRI AND A. A. ANSARI
Botanical Survey of India, Howrah

REFERENCES

BEDDOME, R. H. Icones Plantarum Indiae Orientalis 1. 1874.

GAMBLE, J. S. Flora of the Presidency of Madras 1(2). 1918.

BAKER, J. G. In J. D. HOOKER'S Flora of British India 2. 1876.

KANJILAL, U. N. ET AL. Flora of Assam 2. 1938.

THUNBERG, C. P. Prodromus Plantarum Capensium 1. 1794.

NOTES ON *PHOLIDOTA IMBRICATA* LINDL. (ORCHIDACEAE) AND ITS LOCAL USE IN RANCHI DISTRICT, BIHAR

Orchidaceae, the largest family of flowering plants is well known for its ornamental species. A few of them are of medicinal value. The dried tubers and pseudobulbs of some of them are being used in indigenous system of medicine. Caius (1936) has listed several of the species of orchids with medicinal and poisonous properties.

During the course of a plant survey of Chotanagpur region in February/March 1978, Agarwal came across an orchid being used for medicinal purposes by the local tribals and villagers at Lohardanga in Ranchi District of Chotanagpur region of Bihar. According to the people here the pseudobulbs finely macerated in mustard oil and applied to joints helped to alleviata rheumatic pains. Even water extracts of crushed pseudobulbs was credited with curative properties if taken internally. It was also observed that in their weekly bazars, the pseudobulbs of the orchid were found to be one of the regular commodities for sale by the tribals and villagers. A single pseudobulb is considered sufficient for one application in the affected part of the body. The medicinal property of the orchid has not been reported in Chopra (1956), Kirtikar *et al.* (1935), Watt (1891) & Wealth of India (1969).

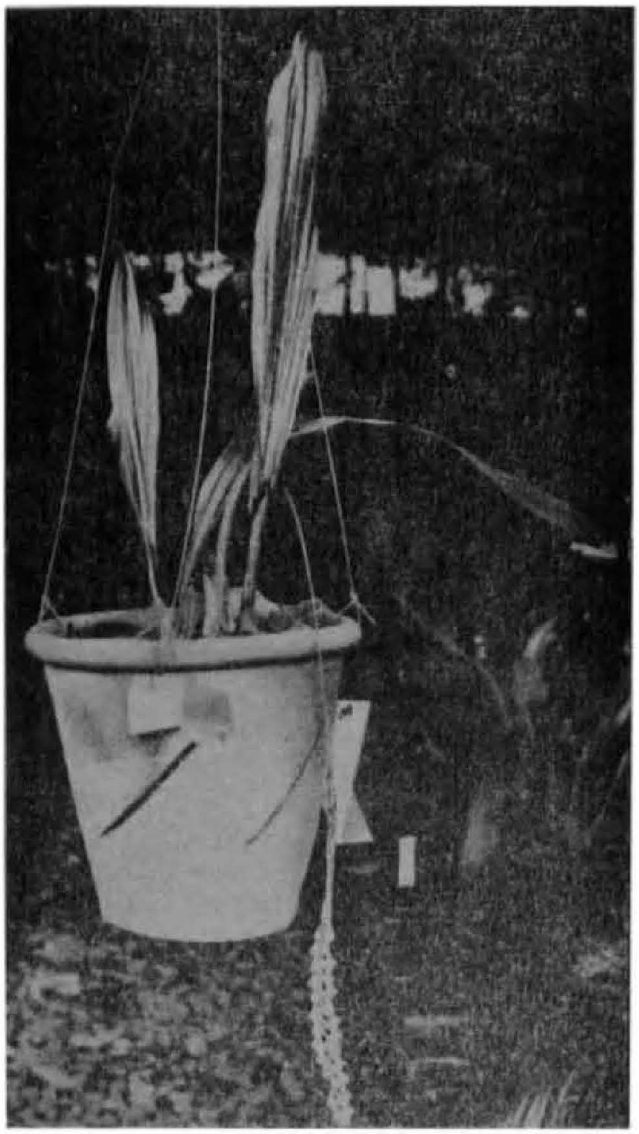

Plate I. *Pholidota imbricata* Lindl. in a pot at Indian Botanic Garden, Howrah

This orchid introduced in the Indian Botanic Garden, Howrah in March, 1978 is flourishing and has flowered. On critical study it is identified as *Pholidota imbricata* Lindl. At Lohardanga, it is a common epiphyte and on some of the trees the old clumps were quite large almost reaching over a metre in circumference. The nearly cylindrical pseudobulbs 5-12 cm high, are very closely clustered with persisting remnants of their sheaths and the variously dried up inflorescences of the previous years. The mature leaves are dark green, one from each pseudobulb, lanceolate, 15-30 cm long and 10-15 cm wide. The inflorescence is slender, long, pendant from the top to the pseudobulb. (Plate I).

Since this sturdy orchid has a fairly wide distribution and can be easily grown under different and variable climatic conditions, it can be widely cultivated. This may prove a fairly cheap remedy for rheumatism and other body pains after due experimentation, both pharmacoglogical and biochemical.

P. K. Sarkar and V. S. Agarwal
Botanical Survey of India, Howrah

REFERENCES

Annonymus. Wealth of India. Council of Scientific & Industrial Research 8. New Delhi. 1969.

Caius, J. F. Medicinal and poisonous orchids of India. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 38(4). 791-799. 1936.

Chopra, R. N., S. L. Nayar and I. C. Chopra. Glossary of Indian Medicinal Plants. New Delhi. 1956.

Kirtikar, K. R. and B. D. Basu. Indian Medicinal Plants (2nd Ed) 4. Allahabad. 1935.

Watt, G. Dictionary of Economic products of India. 6. Calcutta. 1891.

POLYPOGON HISSARICUS (ROSHEV.) BOR—FIRST RECORD FOR INDIA

Recently, while scrutinising the specimens of *Agrostis* L. in the herbarium of Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun (DD), the author located two specimens belonging to *Polypogon hissaricus* (Roshev.) Bor, collected from Srinagar area in Kashmir. Prior to this find, this species was known to occur in Asiatic USSR and neighbouring Iran and Pakistan.

The species was first described as *Agrostis hissarica* by Roshevitz (1923) from Samarkand in USSR. Bor (1956) established another species, namely, *Agrostis stewartii* Bor, based on 2 specimens (Swat, *Stewart* 24733 and Kagan, *Inayat s. n.*) from Pakistan. About ten years later, Bor and Melderis (1965) noted that both *Agrostis stewartii* Bor and *Agrostis hissarica* Roshev. represent one and the same species and hence reduced *Agrostis stewartii* Bor to the synonymy of *Agrostis hissarica* Roshev.

In the genus *Agrostis* L., the disarticulation of the spikelets takes place above the glumes, but in this species the rhachilla is articulated below the glumes, a feature characteristic of the genus *Polypogon* Desf. Bor (1970), therefore, transferred this species to *Polypogon* Desf. For this very reason, earlier, *Agrostis semiverticillata* (Forssk.) Christ was also transferred to the genus *Polypogon* Desf. by Hylander (1945).

This new find from India has been described and illustrated here.

Polypogon hissaricus (Roshev.) Bor, Fl. Iran 70: 307, 1970.

Agrostis hissarica Roshev. Not. Syst. Herb. Hort. Petrop. 4: 93, 1923.

Agrostis stewartii Bor in Kew Bull. 255, 1956; Bor, Grasses Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan 390, 1960; Chase and Niles, Index Grass Spp. 1: 92, 1962.

A perennial caespitose grass with erect or decumbent shoots. *Culms* usually 60-85 cm long, slender, terete, glabrous and shining, 3-4-noded; nodes glabrous, green or purple; branches intravaginal, arising from the lower nodes. *Leaf-sheaths* split to near the base, loose, flattened, striate and glabrous, covering half to two-third the length of the inter-